

## In Brief

**Website launch for NWM**

National Wine Month has launched a website, [nationalwinemonth.org](http://nationalwinemonth.org), to show the trade how to capitalise on the industry initiative in May. Ian Harris, chief executive of WSET and co-ordinator of NWM, said: "The success of the initiative is dependent on the support of the trade, so the website gives companies the information and tools to support National Wine Month to their benefit."

**Harpers chairs climate debate**

The upcoming World Climate Change & Wine Congress in Spain will see Harpers Wine & Spirit editor Richard Siddle chair a debate on how climate change is reported in the media. Kofi Annan, former United Nations secretary-general and recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, will deliver the keynote address at the congress, which takes place on April 13-14 in Marbella.

**Adams buys Leasingham**

Australian winemaker Tim Adams has bought Clare Valley's Leasingham Winery from Constellation. The winery will reopen for the 2012 vintage, serving as a contract processing facility for small producers and growers. The Leasingham brand does not form part of this deal. Constellation expects to complete the sale of its UK and Australian business to Champ Private Equity later this month for \$290 million. See the Big Question, page 15.

**New Zealand's organic pledge**

Organic wine producers in New Zealand have announced 20% of the country's vineyards will be organic by the year 2020. The campaign is organised by Organic Winegrowers New Zealand which is a 140-member national association led by growers.

## RESEARCH

# Aussies fail to entice young UK consumers

By Laura Clark

Younger UK wine drinkers and particularly females are shunning Australian wine, new Wine Intelligence figures have revealed.

Australian wine is engaging older UK wine drinkers, but the category is failing to excite younger consumers.

Wine Intelligence's UK Vinitrac survey from October showed that of the 57% of the UK regular wine drinkers who opted for Aussie wines in the previous six months, two-thirds were aged over 45, with one in four aged over 65.

Under-35 "millennial" wine drinkers account for just under a quarter of the UK's regular wine-drinking population or 3.5 million consumers.

While millennials are price conscious, this doesn't equate to low spend per bottle. Previous Wine Intelligence research showed this group spends more per bottle than older friends and family, often regarding price as a quality indicator.

"On the positive side for Australian producers, this means that current UK drinkers of Australian wine are a group of frequent-consuming, savvy wine drinkers who enjoy being adventurous with their wine choices," Wine Intelligence said.

"This has the knock-on effect that they are not exclusive Aussie wine lovers, and do have a New World wine bias: South

Africa, Chile and California are particularly preferred."

Australian wine was found to be more popular among men than women – 60% of women aren't drinking it compared with 45% of men. Younger women say they steer clear of Australian wines, with some labelling it "boring".

Among its drinkers, Australian wine is favoured for its taste and perceived prestige. Taste topped the poll for 77% of drinkers, 65% stated they are proud to serve Australian wines to their friends and three in five said Australia makes some of the best wines in the world.

■ For more Wine Intelligence commentary on Australian wine, turn to page 34

## AUSTRALIA

## Crops under threat

South-eastern Australian winemakers have been at the mercy of extreme weather in recent weeks as crops were battered first by heavy rain and then by rocketing temperatures.

Wineries in New South Wales face losing up to two-thirds of their crops to downy mildew, producers told Geoffrey Dean, the Times cricket reporter, who has been visiting producers as part of Harpers Wine & Spirit's Ashes and Wine series.

Meanwhile, temperatures hit 42°C in Melbourne over the new year and widespread fire bans were put in place across the Victoria.

Estimates of losses of 1.8 million tonnes to the fungus in NSW have now been downgraded to 1.3 million tonnes. At least 50%, possibly as much as two-

thirds of the crop, will be lost, according to Graham Wellman, viticulturalist for Cellarmaster.

Wellman said: "Nowhere in the eastern states has been spared. And those that manage to escape downy mildew will most likely get powdery mildew or botrytis."

The problem has been compounded by the fact that producers have run out of available spray to counter it.

At Main Ridge winery on the Mornington Peninsula, owner-winemaker Nat White said: "There isn't a vineyard in the region which hasn't got some downy mildew. I've had a few spots but I applied ridomil and I'm not too worried. But in the Murray-Darling Basin, contract growers only get around AUS\$300 a tonne, so it's not worth spraying as it's too expensive."



Wine Australia's new UK director Yvonne May thinks Australian wine is not getting the appreciation it deserves in the press. May, who starts her new job on Monday, 17 January, believes Australian wines are "unbeatable stylistically and for price/quality ratio". She also adds that the "broad assumption" Australia begins and ends with in-store promotions "couldn't be further from the truth".